

Message Text

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R 100818Z SEP 73

FM AMCONSUL NAHA

TO AMEMB TOKYO JAPAN

SECSTATE WASHDC 1197

USARBCO FORT BUCKNER OKINAWA

313TH AD KADENA OKINAWA

COMFLEACTS OKINAWA

3RD MAF OKINAWA

COMUSJ FUCHU JAPAN

CINCPAC POLAD HAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAHA 386 CG MCB CAMP BUTLER OKINAWA

E. O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, MARR JA

SUBJ: YAMANAKA'S OKINAWA CONSTITUENCY

1. SUMMARY: DEFENSE AGENCY DIRECTOR GENERAL YAMANAKA RETAINS HIS POSITION ON OKINAWA AS THE MOST POPULAR MAINLAND POLITICIAN. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SPEECHES AT A ROUTINE RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY AT THE VILLAGE OF KADENA ON SEPT 6 PROVIDED A VIVID REMINDER OF YAMANAKA'S UNIQUE STATUS HERE. THE SPEECHES GIVEN BY VILLAGE

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OFFICIALS AND PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS HAD A COMMON THEME. AFTER A RITUAL RECITAL OF KADENA PROBLEMS IN REGARD TO OUR AIR FORCE BASE, EACH SPEAKER LAVISHLY PRAISED YAMANAKA AS THE FIRST MAINLAND POLITICIAN TO HAVE RECOGNIZED THESE PROBLEMS AND TO HAVE TRIED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM. (APPARENTLY IT WAS AFTER A VISIT BY YAMANAKA, THEN DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, THAT THE GOJ DECIDED TO AID KADENA IN BUILDING THE PUBLIC
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HALL COMMEMORATED IN THESE SPEECHES). AFTER THE SPEECHES SEVERAL

OFFICIALS AND PARTY WORKERS, MOSTLY REFORMISTS, EXPRESSED PRIVATELY TO A CONGEN OFFICER THEIR ADMIRATION AND RESPECT FOR YAMANAKA.

3. THIS WARM FEELING TOWARDS YAMANAKA EXTENDS WIDELY AMONG OKINAWANS WHO, INCLUDING RELATIVELY SOPHISTICATED CIRCLES, TALK OF HIM AS A POTENTIAL PRIME MINISTER. EVEN REFORMISTS CREDIT HIM WITH THE DECISION FOR THE U.S. TO LEAVE NAHA AIRPORT WHICH THEY CLAIM WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DELAYED BY US-GOJ DUPULICITY. HIS COMMENTS ON OKINAWA PROBLEMS RECEIVE FULL AND USUALLY POSITIVE TREATMENT FROM THE PRESS (HE APPEARS TO BE QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN AVOIDING COMMENTS DISTASTEFUL TO OKINAWANS, LEAVING THIS TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND OTHERS). RECENTLY THE PRESS HAS STRESSED HIS POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS ASSISTING U.S. FORCES CONTRACT WORKERS AND ACHIEVING THE COMPLETE

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RETURN OF THE MACHINATO HOUSING AREA. EVEN HIS OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON THE RECENT SAPPORO DISTRICT COURT DECISION AGAINST THE SELF DEFENSE FORCES WAS PROMINENTLY FEATURED IN THE STURDILY LEFTIST LOCAL PRESS WHICH WOULD NORMALLY DOWN PLAY SUCH AN OFFICIAL RESPONSE.

4. YAMANAKA'S LOCAL STATURE RESTS BASICALLY ON HIS REPUTATION AS A SINCERE AND EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE OF OKINAWAN ASPIRATIONS GAINED DURING THE REVERSION NEGOTIATIONS, BUT HE CONTINUES TO WORK AT BUILDING HIS IMAGE. HE MAINTAINS CLOSE CONTACTS WITH ALMOST ALL VARIETIES OF LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS. HE APPARENTLY ENJOYS CLOSE RAPPORT WITH GOVERNOR YARA, ONCE HIS TEACHER ON TAIWAN. YAMANAKA REPORTEDLY DECLINED TO CAMPAIGN FOR LOCAL CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES IN LAST YEAR'S DIET AND GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS TO PRESERVE HIS RELATIONS WITH THE REFORMISTS, BUT THE CONSERVATIVES APPARENTLY ACCEPTED THIS WITH UNDERSTANDING, AT LEAST PUBLICLY.

5. YAMANAKA'S CULTIVATION OF OKINAWANS HAS PAID OFF ON OKINAWA WHERE HE REMAINS THE MOST POPULAR MAINLAND POLITICIAN, REGARDLESS OF PARTY. WE CANNOT JUDGE HOW THIS RELATES TO HIS NATIONAL STANDING, BUT YAMANAKA APPEARS TO HAVE BUILT A POSITION FROM WHICH TO EXERT CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE OVER FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING

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OKINAWA.
SYLVESTER

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